

## Annual Report on the State of the Militia for 1874.

HEAD QUARTERS, OTTAWA,  
January, 1875.

The Honorable  
The Minister of Militia and Defence, &c.

SIR.—The Militia Reports which have been presented to Parliament for several past years, have treated exhaustively the question of its organization and development.

It will therefore be my duty to confine myself to a few condensed remarks, as to the probable improvement of the Dominion Forces.

I approach the subject with hesitation, having so recently arrived for the first time in Canada. I would hardly do so at all, but from the experience gained in my late journey through the provinces of Quebec and Ontario.

To Nova Scotia and New Brunswick I am still a stranger, as well as to Prince Edward Island, Manitoba and British Columbia; but these I hope to visit in turn as soon as possible.

The very able and valuable professional opinions which have from time to time been published, viz:—that of the Defence Commissioners, of Colonel Sir William Jervois, by Major General MacDougall in various forms, as well as by others of experience and repute, and more recently by Colonel Fletcher, Scots Fusilier Guards, in a pamphlet distinguished by acute and practical examination of the conditions applicable to the Canadian Militia to day, leaving me no room for new matter, the whole question having been already so comprehensively discussed.

I commend this admirable review of the Militia to the consideration of the Government, and to the perusal of the Members of the Legislature—if this principle were adopted my work would be simple, details alone would require to be filled in.

I may therefore be pardoned if in the few following suggestions I am found occasionally reiterating what has been already forcibly dealt with.

The first question which presents itself to ask, is: how are the officers, the sergeants, and rank and file of the Militia instructed and grounded in every quality that creates a soldier?

It is replied, we have officers and sergeants who were educated at the Army Schools, who received certificates of classification, and many of whom are animated by military proclivities, and take every opportunity to improve themselves.

All very true, but what opportunity have they had to improve their information since the recall of the Royal Forces?—they cannot all go to Europe; they cannot improve themselves without practice here. I have met some very cultivated officers with many military attainments, and full of zeal; but in the condition of things their number must be limited, and Military Schools no longer exist.

Therefore, how is the supply to meet the demand for the time to come? What provision is there for a future flow of officers and sergeants qualified to instruct the remainder?

“Certainly there are camps of exercise, and very pleasant holiday gatherings no doubt they must have been; but, with some few exceptions, who among them can be qualified to give the necessary and desirable instruction?”

Now, it is evident that, since with the withdrawal of the Royal Troops, military example, emulation in discipline and instruc-

tion, with all that is inseparable from making men into soldiers, are no longer reality. The buccaneering raids of Fenians, which roused the anger and the military ardour of the people, have passed away into oblivion; peace, commercial prosperity and contentment prevail.

“In a ratio, therefore, with the annual diminution of the instructed element, the military spirit languishes in a measure throughout the country, and unless some means of attraction or incentive are produced may decline into a blank.

Notably a few who do not look beyond the present are content with the happy thought, that, should alarm arise, regiments of men could be at once clothed in military garb, and with rifles in their hands be sent forth to fight!

But soldiers cannot be extemporized in such fashion; neither the work of war, nor even the subduing of a street riot could be confided with any safety to the efforts of undisciplined bodies of men.

Wars and commotions in these days we live in, come in surprises, suddenly, and often destructively.

It must not be lost sight of, in the midst of increasing opulence and commercial prosperity, which so often tend to put out of sight the possibility of danger, that the Government of Canada has undertaken the control of a vast territorial Dominion, extending over half a mighty continent, and with an enormous frontier line from the Atlantic to the Pacific, embracing within its western confines wild races of Indians to the extent of at least 60,000, many of whom are of predatory habits, semi-warlike and barbarous in their nature.

Also, that this great Dominion cannot expect to be more exempt than other populous and rapidly expanding countries from the usual causes of internal dissension or commotion.

Progressing therefore in opulence and population, with every respect of growing into a great and influential nation, Canada must at no distant time have power to protect its industry, its commerce and its soil; it must, in the natural course, possess material force to make itself secure and respected among nations by resort to arms if necessary. Permanent military institutions must grow with the growth of the country, as all past history of nations teaches us.

Meantime, the sum voted annually for the Militia must be applied to the best advantage and full value obtained for the money expended,—that is by devoting a portion to bestowing a sound practical military education upon officers and non-commissioned officers, who are the very essence and foundation of all armies, and without whom masses of untaught men, be they ever so well equipped or handsomely clothed, are only a helpless mob.

To this end, therefore, it behoves us to lose no time in creating a substitute for the military schools of the past.

The successful experiment of enrolling two batteries of artillery as training schools for that arm, under two very capable officers of the Royal Artillery, invite us at once to convert these into Brigade Schools for the three arms.

The expense of purchasing cavalry horses might, perhaps, impede the adoption of this plan. I therefore reluctantly omit the cavalry branch for the present; but, as a temporary substitute, it would answer a good purpose to obtain the services of a paid drill instructor for each regiment from the regular cavalry, who should be rated as Sergeant Major.

I therefore submit that a company of En-

gineers and three companies, of Infantry be forthwith embodied, the former in half companies, attached to the Artillery at Quebec and Kingston. The Infantry, one company at Toronto in the New Fort, one at Ottawa as the seat of Government, and one either in Nova Scotia or New Brunswick, each to have a highly proficient instructor from the Royal Army, but otherwise officered from the militia.

The effect of these Infantry Schools would be to infuse a rapid supply of trained officers and sergeants throughout the Militia of the Dominion, qualified to give instruction and provide against a want already seriously felt and annually increasing.

Its immediate important effect would be to supply the most serious defect in the Militia organization:—officers and sergeants qualified to form a permanent regimental staff, without which battalions are as machinery without propellers.

In the British Militia this staff, in ten company battalions, consists of two officers and thirty six sergeants and buglers, but even one officer as Adjutant and Quartermaster with a sergeant major and a bugler, would be of the very first importance to the Canadian forces; it would, doubtless, be better still that, in the outset, the Adjutant should be taken from the regular army.

By these means proper instruction would be certainly afforded; arms and clothing would be carefully preserved where, at present, loss and waste occur; the pay of caretakers would be saved; a responsible officer would be permanently at headquarters of the battalion; a nucleus for elementary training always on the spot; a military system, cohesion, order and regularity, as well as new life and animation, would be infused into the whole organization.

As I had the honor to report to you, on my return to Ottawa, not only on the various duties which would devolve on such a regimental staff, but also on the moral obligation which officers of every degree would feel to become masters of their professional duties at these training schools, I need not enter into detail here.

The staff would, apart from drill, have varied and important duties in the several districts; their execution ensured by monthly reports to headquarters, and, together with the schools, would remove the apparent blank to which, without these means, we may be imperceptibly drifting.

Camps of exercise with this all important element would then become of real and substantial value, as they are admittedly better for teaching troops the varied duties of a soldier's life, and of inspiring a wholesome rivalry and military emulation between regiments, than mere mechanical barrack drill, but only as a consequent upon it.

The formation of an Engineer Company I look upon as no less a necessity than the infantry already treated of. Their duties are peculiar, and require scientific study; an organized force of skilled artisans is indispensable to keep in repair and preserve from decay the valuable forts, batteries, magazines and other costly military works and buildings which embrace some of the most modern improvements. I only mention these among the many duties which fall into the wide sphere of an Engineer's attainments.

I have proposed a half a company for Kingston; owing to its central position from whence working parties could be detached east or west when required; and a half company at Quebec, owing to the extent of its fortifications and works.

I therefore venture to urge the formation of Brigade Schools on your serious consideration.